

**UNITED STATES-EUROPEAN RELATIONS: THE VIEW
FROM THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

HEARING
BEFORE THE
**COMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**
ONE HUNDRED SIXTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

Wednesday, April 12, 2000

Serial No. 106-135

Printed for the use of the Committee on International Relations



Available via the World Wide Web: http://www.house.gov/international_relations

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

66-307 CC

WASHINGTON : 2000

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UNITED STATES-EUROPEAN RELATIONS: THE VIEW FROM THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 2000

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10 a.m., in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Benjamin A. Gilman (Chairman of the Committee) presiding.

Chairman GILMAN. I am delighted to call this hearing of the Committee on International Relations to order.

Today, our Committee on International Relations meets to receive, for the very first time, statements by means of Digital Video Conference in our newly renovated and equipped hearing room. Our topic today is United States-European Relations: The View from the European Parliament.

As I wrote our witnesses, the closeness of the relations between the House and the EP makes it quite natural that we would call on our friends in Europe to help us inaugurate our new facility.

We were not certain until quite recently just when this facility would be ready. They have been working on it for several months.

We are very fortunate to have good friends who are willing to appear and discuss their views on such relatively short notice. Mel, we thank you and Elmar and our other good colleagues for joining us today.

We are very happy to have testimony from several eminent members of the European Parliament: Mel Read, Chair of the Delegation for Relations with the United States; Elmar Brok, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Carlos Westendorp, Chairman of the Committee on Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy, and Karla Peijs, Vice Chairman of the Delegation for Relations with the United States. I will return to introduce you all as we call on you.

I also want to emphasize that this hearing is not meant in any way to supplant the work of the Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue. That work, of course, will continue under the agreed-upon procedures on the basis of mutual decisions.

As we discussed in Brussels, I do hope that we will be able to have a continuing series of discussions by video conference involving expert Members on each side to get into the issues in depth. We will continue to have our formal meetings of the full delegations, with the next one to occur in this room in June.

Finally, our staffs stand ready to help Members of the European Parliament and the House to obtain information about actions in the other body and to put Members in contact with one another.

Every 6 months our Committee invites the Ambassador of the Member State of the EU presiding over the Council, along with the Head of the Commission's Delegation, to meet with our Members. Yesterday, we heard from Ambassador Rocha Paris and Ambassador Burghardt, and we had an excellent discussion with them.

Now, colleagues, instead of hearing Ambassadors of administrations, we have the opportunity to meet via video conference with the directly elected representatives of the people of Europe. Our topic today is open ended, and deliberately so. We want to hear your views and give you time to develop them and then have a dialogue.

In our view, these discussions are necessary because while the transatlantic relationship is good, it is going through one of its most difficult periods. Trade issues—bananas, beef, biotech, not to mention hushkits, farm policies, and so on—trouble lawmakers and the public on both sides. On the political side, there continue to be differences between our Administrations and perhaps between majorities in our two bodies.

We were disappointed to have learned that European governments would not be able to agree to cosponsor a U.S. resolution on human rights in China at the United Nations Human Rights Commission meetings in Geneva. The need for unity may lead to a "least common denominator" approach to policy that you may come to regret, and we already regret—at least in this instance.

Just this morning at breakfast I had the opportunity of meeting with the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China, and we mentioned how regretful we were that they are addressing the situation in Geneva in a very negative manner. We want to show our concern over human rights throughout the world, and particularly in the People's Republic of China.

We were also disappointed to learn about some of the very open concerns expressed by non-EU NATO partners over the way the ESDP is being developed. I know that one of our speakers has a special expertise on this issue, and we will be very much interested in having another good discussion on how ESDP is developing.

In our discussions yesterday with representatives of the European administrations we heard how important the ongoing Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) was from their perspective. We have heard discussed with you how you perceive a need to adapt European institutional arrangements to a larger and perhaps deeper EU.

I know that Mr. Brok is one of the EP's representatives to the IGC, Elmar, and I know that Mrs. Read has been especially keen to explain to our American colleagues the current powers of the EP. So, I hope that we will get into these issues for the sake of the wider American audience we now have.

At this point, I would ask Mr. Gejdenson, our Ranking Minority Member, if he would have some opening comments, and I would like to introduce our two panelists after that. Mr. Gejdenson.

Mr. GEJDENSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a pleasure initiating this oceanic dialogue, and it is great to see our friends from

Europe and say hello, and I look forward to having substantive discussions on a regular basis. We all take occasional trips back and forth, but I think this will actually help us in that relationship, and I welcome this opportunity.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Gejdenson. It is good to have Mr. Gejdenson part of our exchange with our European colleagues.

Now I would like to call on our Vice Chairman, Mr. Bereuter, the gentleman from Nebraska.

Mr. BEREUTER. Good morning, colleagues, nice to see you even at a distance, Mr. Westendorp, Elmar Brok, (who is a long-time friend) and Mrs. Read. I think it is particularly important that we initiate even closer contacts between the European Parliament and the U.S. Congress.

I just returned from Brussels this past weekend where we were having the Standing Committee of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and, Elmar, you might like to know that we spent quite a bit of time talking about your proposal in conjunction with NATO Interparliamentary Exchange President Javier Ruperez (Spain), to tighten the relationship and dialogue between the European Parliament and the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

It is very difficult to have actual reciprocity between the two bodies in a very specific sense, but I think your proposal was generally very well received. As a matter of fact, I suggested a few additional ways that we think we could provide you with more information about the military capacity of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

We know that individually you have a substantial knowledge about that area, but since the European Union is proposing that the ESBI, now SBP, will be within the European Union, it seems that our understanding should be particularly well developed in that area.

I suggested that Members of the European Parliament should also have several slots on our annual military tour, as well as one on our defense subcommittee's annual visit to the United States where they visit with people at the Pentagon, the other Executive agencies related to defense, and then some of our major installations.

In addition to having you there as associate members for the most part in our future meetings, particularly the spring and the fall major meetings of the Parliamentary Assembly, this might help build a better bridge of understanding.

As I was looking at newspapers in Europe this past weekend, I saw, for example, in the Herald Tribune, an article about growing anti-Americanism in Europe, especially in France—no surprise to us—and also concern among the six European NATO members who are not members of the European Union. Of course, developing the linkages between the EU, including the European Parliament, and the NATO organization, including the Parliamentary Assembly, I think is crucial if, in fact, the ESDP is to be developed fully as a European pillar.

I might also say one other thing. My biggest fear of all is that growing trade antagonisms between the European Union and Canada and the United States on the other hand may spill over and effect the ability of the West through NATO to defend its interests

and to take action out of area to deal with crises that may occur near the NATO 19.

I also am incredibly—I don't know if I should use the word "impressed"—but aware of the fact that the European Union has moved so far into the area of effecting the lives of the member nations' population. I think that is very positive in terms of building a strong Europe, and we are, I think as you know, bipartisanly supportive of the growth of European institutions as epitomized by the European Union and the European Parliament. But I also see it going on a very divergent track from what is happening in the United States. There is a greater tolerance for regulation on a multi-national sense in Europe today than there would be on national regulation of American citizens.

We are deregulating. We are reducing the role of government in the lives of our citizens. I am impressed with the 20,000 to 30,000 people who work in your European Union bureaucracy and the willingness of Europeans to dedicate more and more of those decisions to the European Union. I am not critical—that is a European decision—but I do think now we do have divergence in our approach to dealing with constituents. We therefore need to build understanding between the European Parliament and the Congress of the United States to avoid deep frictions that could divide our peoples.

Thank you very much for being such a willing group of interlocutors on so many issues, and we look forward to this dialogue today. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Doug Bereuter. We are pleased to be joined by another one of our Subcommittee Chairmen, Chris Smith, who is Chairman of our Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights. Mr. Smith.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Regrettably, I have a press conference over the AFL-CIO on the WTO and MFN. But let me just say this is a very important hearing. I am certainly glad that you are conducting it. You and Mr. Bereuter, I think, are to be commended for your leadership on European issues throughout the many years, and I look forward to looking at the testimony at the conclusion of the day. I yield back the balance.

Chairman GILMAN. I know you have a prior commitment, but I hope you can return shortly.

Let me note that there is a Democratic Conference right now, and so our Minority Members will be joining us along the way.

Our first speaker is Mrs. Mel Read. As I noted before, she is Chairwoman of the EP's Delegation for Relations with the U.S. Mel is a leader of the Socialist Group in Parliament, and represents a constituency in Nottingham and Leicestershire, northwest England. I informed my colleagues in January that you are bound to fail if you try to rattle Mrs. Read because she is a beekeeper by avocation. She chaired our last meetings and did a great job at keeping us on track and on schedule. I very much appreciate Mel's willingness to share her views with us. Chairwoman Read, please proceed, and if you have a statement to submit for the record or want to e-mail it on to us, we will be pleased to make it part of the record. Please proceed.

Mrs. READ. Mr. Gilman, thank you very much, indeed. Good afternoon to all of your colleagues there in Washington. We bring you greetings from the U.S. Delegation here in the Parliament and, of course, from the Parliament itself, and we are in Strasbourg, the home of the European Parliament.

My remarks will be fairly brief then, they are by way of introduction to my two prestigious colleagues, but I did want to say a few words very briefly about the Trans-Atlantic Legislature's dialogue.

As you know, both you and I and, indeed, our two Delegations, set great store by this dialogue, and I think your introduction, particularly over the trade areas, are going to form the basis of our discussion hopefully in May and June.

We are on course here with the practical and political arrangements, and I anticipate that we will have two TLD video conference link dialogues in May, and I very much hope another one in June, although we do understand that elections in the U.S.A. may make this more difficult.

Our Delegation meets tomorrow, and we will be finalizing our own suggestions about our joint Delegation in Washington, in June, where we will have the opportunity, I think, to review how well the TLD has gone in the meantime.

But then, if I may, I would like to introduce you properly to my two colleagues here, both of whom you have mentioned. First is Mr. Elmar Brok, who I know is a long-time personal friend of yours and, of course, very well known to many of your colleagues. Mr. Brok is Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee here in the European Parliament and, if I may, I will ask him to make a contribution, his own comments for the record. Mr. Brok, if you would like to contribute.

Mr. BROK. Thank you. Thank you, Ben, for your questions and also what Mr. Bereuter has said about the concerns of our six non-European Union NATO countries. I think it is an important question which we have to take seriously.

When we develop our European Security Defense Policy, we must ensure that we do not create divisions within NATO because we believe that NATO will be for a very long time the body for the collective defense of Europe, and there is no dispute about it at all. What we want to develop is not to weaken this role of NATO, but to strengthen European possibilities and our way of burdensharing.

As you know, we are on the stage of developing the European Union in this Intergovernmental Conference in order to prepare the European Union for enlargement, and the enlargement process is one of our most important cases to broaden the basis for peace, freedom and stability in Europe. The more countries we are able to take into the European Union, the broader the space for stability in Europe and that is in our common interest.

This is our main purpose of security policy, but security policy is not the only reason for enlargement, but an important part of it. The more countries who join us in this process—and I think the possibility that the first countries, especially the three central European NATO countries—Hungary, Czech Republic, and Poland—has a chance to join around 2003 the European Union, the NATO nations are in a good way.

This Intergovernmental Conference which will be finished in December of this year has the main purpose to prepare the Union for a bigger membership. Our decisionmaking procedures are not good enough to deal with more than 15 member countries, we want to prepare for that with the relationship of the institutions, the decisionmaking process, the more qualified majority voting especially is one of the main instruments to achieve this goal.

To raise one question more, what we are to do with our defense policy. We have learned so much about the situation in former Yugoslavia. The Europeans were absolutely unable to develop a policy of prevention that such regional wars were not possible again. Only thanks to the United States it was possible that peace negotiations had a chance and that they have a chance to have more stability in this region. Mr. Westendorp has personal experience in this task, and his responsibilities he had in that region before he came to the European Parliament.

We believe that our meetings in civil crisis management, we have done a lot of foreign aid to that region, to Europe, to the Mediterranean, that we have a certain ability to combine our capacities in civil and military crisis management in order to do a job that regional conventional wars will not come possible again.

This is not against NATO, it is with NATO, complementary to NATO, and if NATO wants to take over this task, we would be perfectly happy if they would do it, but we cannot imagine that in every local case the United States would do the job for us Europeans, and for this moment when NATO wants them to do that, we must have our capacities and our common interests to look for more stability in Europe, and therefore we wanted to revise it and bring it together. What Doug has mentioned about our joint approach, the European Parliament and NATO Assembly, it is specially to involve non-EU countries along with member countries in our task.

When we have in the future our quarterly sessions of Human Relations Committee of European Parliament with Commissioner Patten and High Representative Solana, we are happy to invite NATO—parliamentarians from NATO countries to these hearings—the Poles, the Turks, Members of United States Congress—to take part in these hearings in order to get the information, to ask the proper questions in order to have a possibility that on the level of Parliamentarians to keep our unity going in the same direction. Therefore, very much the vast majority of this European Parliament to go along such lines, to do it together, and if we can play a role in the NATO Assembly, then it is on the other side the same way to keep us together, and we will force also our Administrations to go the same line in order to avoid any misinterpretation of our approach and our common goals. Thank you.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you.

Mrs. READ. Thank you, Mr. Brok. I was going to say, Ben, that it was, I think, noteworthy that the Delegation that came to Brussels from Congress in January were able to meet both Commissioner Patten and also the High Representative, Mr. Solana, and I think both meetings were mutually beneficial.

Chairman GILMAN. Mel, they were very helpful to us, and we welcome that opportunity to have first hand expressions of their

views with regard to the direction in which they were going on the new defense posture.

Mel, would you like to proceed?

Mrs. READ. Yes, thank you. Thank you very much. Can I introduce to colleagues now, Mr. Carlos Westendorp, who is the Chair of the Industry and Trade Committee, also a Member of the U.S. Delegation, as is Mr. Brok. Mr. Westendorp.

Chairman GILMAN. Welcome.

Mr. WESTENDORP. Hello, colleagues and dear friends. I think are using for the first time a very good device which is going to allow us to deal with many issues that we dealt with in our last meeting in Brussels but, unfortunately, we have no time to deepen the analysis of each item. So, I think with this device we can discuss and on many occasions prevent, diffuse possible contentious issues between United States and Europe.

We are together closely monitoring the evolution of the WTO conversations in Geneva. We are also dealing with the so-called "left-overs" of Marrakesh, but at the same time we have to prepare the new round whenever the moment is right. We are, in the Parliament, not going to have elections, but we understand that you are going to have elections, and this is a more difficult situation perhaps to come to definitive arrangements. But, anyhow, we have taken very important initiatives by writing a joint letter to our Administrations, respective Administrations, in order to provide us with data about agriculture in order to see the facts before we start quarreling about how the situation in our respective agricultures are. We may discover very interesting things about that.

We are following very closely your negotiations with China and our negotiator is doing that. We believe that the tension between the continent and Taiwan must be diffused. You are doing a lot, but I believe that an agreement with China and the WTO is a step in the right direction. But at the same time, I share with you your concerns about the situation of human rights in China, so this is something that the European Parliament feels very strongly about, and we are going to see how our other bodies are behaving in the United Nations bodies because what you have told us, it goes, I think, in the opposite direction of what the European Parliament would like.

As far as the anti-Americanism you are feeling, I don't think you should be very much concerned about that because sometimes it is an expression of the defense of cultural identities which is something that, in my opinion, is a nonstarter because we are dressing like the Americans. We are eating the same as the Americans. We are speaking all English. So you need not worry about that.

But I shall tell you that in the last Lisbon Summit, what we have done is just to constitute what we call Europe.com, that is to say we are following your direction, your success in the new society, the new information society, ecommerce, et cetera. So, you see, you are still our example to follow on many issues. Thank you.

Mrs. READ. Thank you very much, Carlos. Thank you.

I am looking to you, Ben. Those are our two contributions.

Chairman GILMAN. We thank you for the contributions, and we are off to a good start, and we welcome Congressman Brad Sher-

man, who has joined us, a Representative from California, who would like to make a few opening remarks. Mr. Sherman.

Mr. SHERMAN. Thank you. I thank the European Parliamentarians who have joined us, at least through virtual reality.

In your dealings with the American State Department, you will deal with people who want to get along, see things from, I think, a European view, and this may give you the wrong impression of where the United States is heading to the extent Americans think about these issues at all.

Our State Department doesn't worry that much about burdensharing, but our people will. Our State Department doesn't care very much about the trade deficit, which is the largest in the history of mammalian life, but our people will, and they are here to demonstrate at the Capitol today, inspired by those concerns.

So, one particular issue I want to mention in my opening remarks is of great concern to my own constituency in California, and that is the pressure that European governments are putting on the World Bank to cause it to make loans to Iran. To think that a country would get concessionary loans of your money and ours at a time when they are about to begin the trial of 13 Jews imprisoned in Shiraz solely because of their religion, is a matter that we should take very seriously. I realize our own Government has already made premature overtures to Iran, but at least we have not given them aid or concessionary loans or investments. For Europe to pressure The World Bank into taking money, a tiny part of which comes from my constituency, and loan it to Iran just as these trials, phony trials, mock trials, are about to begin is a major irritant and a future irritant in U.S.-European relations.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Sherman.

Let me address our opening question, should the European Union States be free to announce their support of the U.S. resolution on China at the U.N. Human Rights Commission at Geneva, should they so choose?

I understand there has been an opportunity, and a direction pretty much in EU, to have a combined effort rather than individual states. Are the European Union nations being asked not to announce their support and not to lobby other countries?

Are you familiar with the situation relative to the Geneva meeting?

Mrs. READ. Do you want us to respond to that, Ben?

Chairman GILMAN. Yes, we would welcome it, Mel.

Mrs. READ. Elmar, do you want to start?

Mr. BROK. Yes. Thank you very much. First of all, I would like to answer about the 13 Jewish prisoners. The Iranian Embassy sent us today information material that they were ready to give every one of them a lawyer, which is of course progress, but I believe that so long as someone, because of his religious background, is discriminated in a country in such a way and just because of that is in a situation that he might be punished by death penalty, we have to take actions for that. I can assure you that we have given this material to our Human Rights Committee to take action on that, and we would like to work with you together to have better situation for these people in Iran. At the European Parliament,

for example, stopped a financial project to Syria until the Jewish community could leave Syria.

We are ready to defend Jewish interests in Iran with you together, and I think perhaps this discussion might come to a joint approach to ask the Iran authorities to stop this.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Elmar, that is good news. Mr. Sherman wanted to make an intervention.

Mr. SHERMAN. I do want to thank you for your comments, but I think that money speaks far more loudly than words, resolutions, and comments. I, too, am gratified that those in Shiraz will be given lawyers, but if memory serves me correctly, in the Stalin "show" trials, the defendants were given lawyers briefly before their execution. I do not think that the death penalty will result from what is going on in Shiraz, but even long sentences for holding a particular religion then to occur and then to be rewarded with money from The World Bank would be a travesty. But I do thank you for your efforts, I know you are sincerely concerned. I just want to take that concern from a rhetorical level to an economic level.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Sherman.

Let me address a further question. How do you think the changes that the IGC contemplates will change the way the EU relates to the world and to our own Nation?

Mr. BROK. The Intergovernmental Conference will not change the situation until perhaps the possibility that we can be more effective by majority voting in the Council to prepare for negotiations. In trade matters, for example, to put questions like to majority voting in order to give a mandate to the Commission for negotiations, that would make it much easier, for example, to come to compromise at the end of the day because the room for maneuvering in negotiations will become bigger. I think we will also perhaps discuss the question of voting on foreign policy which isn't our system now, but in a general way, the Intergovernmental Conference is just an internal affair of a balance between institutions, how many commissioners should be there, how will be the weighting of votes from member countries and the council, how many seat every country should have in the European Parliament, the increase of majority voting and such questions so that it will be of no direct impact to your country. The only impact will be that first of all European Union is much more able to come to decisions and, because of that, we might be able to get more members in the European Union.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Elmar. Now, Elmar and Carlos, our GAO will soon be publishing a report on Bosnia. It concludes that the effort to implement the civilian requirements of the Dayton Agreement will fail unless we can address the endemic crime and corruption problems that affects every aspect of Bosnia's politics and economy. Do you agree with that conclusion?

Mrs. READ. Carlos?

Mr. BROK. Ben, I have to leave now because my group has a special session about the Intergovernmental Conference in order to make sure we are ready to go tomorrow in Plenary. I think my group Chairman will be there.

Chairman GILMAN. Elmar, we welcome your presence. You are always rushing off to another meeting. We know how many respon-

sibilities you have, but it is good talking to the Chairman of Foreign Affairs in the European Parliament.

Mrs. READ. Mr. Westendorp will answer, Ben, on Bosnia, if that is all right.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Mel. Carlos.

Mr. WESTENDORP. Yes, Ben. I think the situation in Bosnia is moving, but very, very slowly, much more slowly than the speed that the international Community would like to give to the whole process in order to be able to pull out.

So, there is a kind of disconnection to this slowness of the process in Bosnia, and the speed, the impatient situation of the international community. We have to come to a conclusion that Bosnia needs us for quite a while, but the question is whether they are capable of doing that by themselves. I don't think they are. They need us in order to take decisions. The concept of ownership, it is a very nice concept, but they totally realize that to fight against corruption, to stand up with privatization, to have a sound financial system, they need the push of the international community. So, I think we have to stay there and push them.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Carlos. I will now turn to our Vice Chairman, Doug Bereuter.

Mr. BEREUTER. Thank you, Chairman Gilman. I want to ask a question and give you some information you might find interesting on the Balkans. Before I do that, however, Mr. Westendorp, I thought I would focus on Pascal Lamy's recent negotiations for the European Union with regard to China's accession to the WTO.

We were disappointed, as perhaps you were, that there was no successful conclusion to those accession talks. It could well effect—although I hope it won't—the United States Congress' consideration of Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) with China which is one of the conditions, as far as the Chinese are concerned, to their accession agreement with the United States. Of course, you, your country, and every other member of the WTO gain from the accession agreement that we have put in place with the People's Republic of China (PRC).

There is a common perception in the United States, found on editorial pages and elsewhere, that your trade commissioner may have been under some pressure to go further than the Americans were able to go with China WTO accession—that is, to have additional tariff or other kind of market opening concessions from the Chinese.

I wonder if you would address the view that it was diplomatically—I will say politically—important for your commissioner to go further than the United States had taken the PRC. Then, second, and really more importantly to us, what are your thoughts about how soon the European Union can complete successfully its accession talks with the PRC?

Mr. WESTENDORP. Yes. Exactly this morning, a few hours ago, Commissioner Lamy has been informing a group of Parliamentarians in the European Parliament about his conversations with China—his negotiations with China.

He doesn't hide from us the difficulties for this agreement, but he told us several things which are very important. First of all, that we are in a very close—he is in very close contact with your

negotiators, and both sides know very well each other's positions, so there is, let us say, common views on many issues. Of course, there are differences of interest in the United States and in Europe about different items, but it doesn't prevent—this is the second conclusion—that the negotiations are being very difficult, but they are ongoing satisfactorily. What Lamy has done is to come here to see how the Member States feel about these conversations, the results of these conversations.

He didn't tell us that he is under any pressure from any Member State about going further than the United States. What we think in the European Union in general, it is that an agreement with China is a very important thing because to have China in is much better than to have China out. Of course, for China to submit to the disciplines of the WTO would be a major step in the right direction—that is to say, to have China as a reliable partner.

So, we are not just looking at what the Congress is going to do, but we are just negotiating in good faith and with the intention of finishing these negotiations when they are right.

Mrs. READ. Thank you, Carlos.

Mr. BEREUTER. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, can I move on to the Balkans, or do you want to go to our colleague, Mr. Sherman, first?

Chairman GILMAN. Go ahead.

Mr. BEREUTER. I would tell you a little bit of what has happened here lately with respect to American participation in the Balkans, in Bosnia, and, particularly, in Kosovo.

I led a delegation of about 12 members of the House Delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly to Kosovo in mid-February, and, frankly, I was very concerned about the level of ethnic cleansing, the violence that still is taking place and the lack of any kind of judicial system. Civil government in general is just absent, and there is tremendous pressure on ethnic minorities—the Serbs in Kosovo and right across the border, the Albanian ethnics in that part of Serbia.

Shortly thereafter, approximately 10 days ago, the House of Representatives, as a part of debate on a supplemental appropriation bill, had a burdensharing amendment offered by a bipartisan group of Members, including the Chairman of the House Budget Committee. It was based upon similar legislation proposed by Senator John Warner of Virginia.

Basically it attempted to measure how the European countries, including the EU countries, were doing in meeting their commitments for civil, military, police assistance and for efforts generally within Kosovo. Different percentages for each of those several categories would serve as the measurements.

The concern that exists in this country—rightly or wrongly—that the Europeans are not meeting their commitments particularly with regard to the International Police Force to Kosovo, thereby causing additional burdens on the military forces from all of our countries that are participating in Kosovo.

That amendment received approximately 45 percent of the vote in the House. It did not pass, but it had strong bipartisan commitment. While I did not support it, I could understand that, in fact, our colleagues and the American people want to know, first, that

there is equitable burdensharing on addressing the reconstruction of a civil society in Kosovo; and, second, that this is not an unlimited, very lengthy process in which we are involved in Kosovo, at least in terms of its impact on our budget.

Chairman Gilman, along with Mr. Smith whom you heard, myself, and many other members, have introduced legislation in the House which does have a burdensharing provision in it, but it is not a flat dollar amount. It is simply saying that we will pay 15 percent of the total cost as compared to the other NATO countries and those in the EU that are not members of NATO. Perhaps we will raise that to 18 percent which is a figure that the Administration has often cited.

Ours, unlike the Kasich amendment I referred to earlier, does not require a troop pullout. It just requires an annual balancing of financial commitments over the next 5 years.

In addition to that, however, this legislation would authorize substantial additional assistance, particularly to Montenegro and to Macedonia (the Republic of Macedonia, if you prefer) including a major education effort and security effort in Macedonia, since we think so much of the cost or burdens of the conflict in Yugoslavia, in Serbia, and especially in Kosovo, have fallen on Macedonia.

I did want you to be aware of that legislation. It is possible we might even mark it up in Full Committee this week. We are working with the Ranking Democrat, Sam Gejdenson, to see if, in fact, we could have bipartisan support on it. The number, for your information, is H.R. 4053.

I did want to bring you up to date on my concern that things are going very badly in Kosovo, and I also wanted you to know about the emerging and, in fact, intensifying debate in the United States about burdensharing in Bosnia and now in Kosovo.

Thank you for listening, and I would love to have any response you would like to direct my way.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Bereuter.

Mel, I see we are joined by another panelist. Welcome, Karla. Do you want to introduce her for our Members?

Mrs. READ. Yes, I certainly will. Colleagues, this is Dr. Karla Peijs, who is the Vice Chair of the Delegation and a very active and innovative Vice Chair. I am sure she will want to say a few words, if she may, but, first, I will ask Carlos to respond to that very important last question. Please.

Ms. PEIJS. Hi, Ben.

Chairman GILMAN. Welcome, Karla.

Mr. WESTENDORP. I totally share your concerns about Kosovo. First of all, it was expected. It is happening as kind of a revenge from the Albanians against the Serbs, and ethnic cleansing a reality which is very worrisome, we still believe—I still believe at least—that we should work for ethnic integration in Kosovo; otherwise, independence would be a very bad solution for the whole region.

I think the problems in Kosovo, also as expected, is that there are too many chiefs and very few Indians. First of all, there is the many organizations—the IMF, The World Bank, the European Union, the AID, the OEC, et cetera—and they had a lot of difficulties to coordinate all these organizations.

What he needs is full power and full support. I agree with you that the European Union should give him much more support.

When I was in Bosnia, I worked there for 2 years having the full support of the United States on the one hand, and the European Union on the other hand. We had a lot of problems, for instance, the problem of the police, but we managed to have all the policemen we needed. We also had the convention which was the mobile troops in order to prevent riots.

Now I understand that there are few policemen, around 2,000, and they will need many more of them. I totally agree with you, and we are pressing ahead from the European Parliament in order to provide Kouchner with the police and with the assistance, financial assistance, that he needs.

Mrs. READ. Thank you very much, Carlos.

Ben, can I invite Karla Peijs to say a few words to your colleagues?

Chairman GILMAN. Yes, please. Welcome, Karla.

Ms. PEIJS. Ben, in the last meeting that we had in Brussels, there were a few things that we wanted your attention for the early warning system. We made progress on our side on a few issues, one of these is the Podrie Kosmetica Products—I should speak English, of course—and there is a decision taken by the Commission to send a proposal for a directive to the Parliament and the Council, and that is really an important thing in the relationship between you and us. This is an early warning that is coming up that the Parliament will think about it and get it not only an opinion but decision together with the Council, and maybe in the next meeting that we have together we should talk about that.

The second thing is the hushkit that the Parliament together with the European Commission agreed about the ruling, and that the ruling really should go into effect on the 4th of May of this year.

So, I think that the sense of the Council of all the members of the member states, that you can go on in the negotiations with United States, the way we did until now. So, maybe also this is a thing that we have to get on the agenda all over again in our June meeting.

Mrs. READ. Thank you, Karla.

Carlos has to leave us now. Carlos has another meeting to go to, if he could just say goodbye to you.

Chairman GILMAN. Carlos, thank you for being there. Please, let us try to find some solutions to our trade problems along the way, they have been a real thorn in our sides, and whatever we can do by working together, Carlos.

Mr. WESTENDORP. Yes, absolutely. I am entirely at your disposal. Thank you very much for this opportunity. I hope to see you soon.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you for taking part in our first opportunity to use our new—

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman GILMAN. Mr. Sherman.

Mr. SHERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will apologize in advance if some of my comments are a bit intemperate, but my colleague from California, Dana Rohrbacher, is not here, and I feel I must make up for his absence.

We heard from one of your colleagues about the Iran situation, and I do know—and I want to thank European Parliamentarians and governments for making oral statements both publicly and privately—but what concerns me is the pressure on The World Bank continues, and we do face a situation where I am being asked that—this is the pressure on The World Bank to make loans to Iran at a time when Iran is developing nuclear weapons and at a time when Iran is going forward with the trial of the 13 Jews in Shiraz—so I am being asked to vote to continue to spend money and, more importantly, to risk our soldiers and to tie them up on a different continent in Kosovo. We have a major vote on that tomorrow.

At the same time, Europe is undermining efforts for peace in the greater Middle Eastern region by doing business as usual and now providing investments and loans, and even pressuring international organizations to make loans to Iran, and I think it would be very difficult for many of us to continue to support the Kosovo effort in a spirit of cooperation with Europe under those circumstances.

I would be gratified to learn that at least some of the governments you represent are not going to continue pressing The World Bank to make loans to Iran at this time. I don't know if any of you are prepared to assuage my concerns.

Chairman GILMAN. Don't jump all in at once.

Mrs. READ. I am jumping in. May I try and make a response to that. The first thing I would like to say is that I think it would be very useful for the Delegation from the Parliament, and I hope the Delegation from Congress, if we let you have in advance of our visit in June, a copy of the European Parliament's annual report on human rights. I think then you and your colleagues will be able to see the scale of the work that we do in this area and the response that we think is a considered response that we make to issues that come before us.

But I would want to say that as well as being critical, we do, of course, have to be self-critical of allegations of breaches of human rights within the European Union, I think particularly of Northern Ireland, and perhaps I ought to say here that when your delegation came to Brussels in January, one of the things that we did want to acknowledge was the role that the United States and Senator Mitchell in particular had played in the Northern Ireland peace process, but my own country, Great Britain, has been criticized and, indeed, found guilty of breaches of human rights in Northern Ireland.

I say that to put into context our own criticism of many other countries and, indeed, if I can be blunt, of the United States of America and the existence of the death penalty in the United States. It is a little joke we sometimes make in the European Union that should—and I know it is an unlikely hypothetical case—the United States ever want to join the European Union, you would not be eligible, you would not be eligible because of the existence of the death penalty. I don't make that as a serious point, although there are concerns, serious concerns, and I know concerns among many of you. But back to your point, sir, about the linking

of the loans, financial assistance, and the very serious breach of human rights that you outlined.

Mr. Westendorp has made very clear, I think, his own position, and indeed that of the Parliament and of the Member States, over this particular very, very serious issue.

I want, Ben, to make a general point because I am not in a position—nor are any of us—I emphasize that this is an informal exchange of views, it is not the 'Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue, it is a very informal first step—but if we were to be too strenuous in always linking allegations or even proven breaches of human rights with economic sanctions or restrictions, I think we would get ourselves into some very, very severe difficulties.

I am not quite sure whether I was entirely following your argument that this particular case in Iran, which is very, very serious, of course, and is a major concern, and the aid that is coming through to Bosnia and the Balkans should be linked in any way. I don't think that is what you were saying, and I am sure it is not what is meant, but I would ask—

Mr. SHERMAN. That is exactly what I am saying. That is exactly what I meant. Perhaps I should explain. I mean, you offer to bring me a report on human rights in June. By then the trials will be over. But, frankly, resolutions—and resolutions are important, and we hope to have a resolution on the Floor of the House tomorrow about this—but resolutions to dictatorial regimes are simply comic relief, and for Europe to come to the United States when it has trouble in the Balkans—you did not come and ask for resolutions, you did not come and ask for Parliamentarians to give speeches. You came and asked for troops and money, and are continuing to put us in a position where we have to station armies in Asia and Europe simultaneously, in Korea and in Kosovo, and for Europe at the same time to be the moving force behind aiding Iran creates a problem for the United States in a third region of the world.

I gather from what you say that because of problems in Northern Ireland or because you disagree with the American death penalty, that it is fully acceptable for European governments to pressure The World Bank into making loans to a regime while the trials are about to begin. I know you disagree with our death penalty legislation, but it seems like a very odd policy.

I do also, since this whole building is—I want to mention a little bit about the China situation because I know my remarks are less temperate than those you hear from our State Department, and what I am about to say also differs from our State Department. Ninety percent, 99 percent of our foreign policy establishment favors this deal with China, 70 percent of our people are against it. As Parliamentarians, you are closer to the people than is your own Foreign Ministry, and I hope that you would guide your governments toward a recognition that it is not enough just to shake hands with our diplomats. European policies need to be more consistent, or ought to at least take into account views of the American people that may take half a decade to bubble up to the point where they influence policy. For example, the Governor of Texas, Mr. George W. Bush, in dealing with Kosovo, has said, "Look, we are the peacemakers, somebody else ought to be the peacekeepers". Now, I am not sure he will be serious about that should he become

President, and I don't support him for President, but the idea that the United States would have to maintain for a generation or longer peacekeeping forces in the Balkans while at the same time having the fighting responsibility in the Gulf, in Korea, and in many other places around the world is apparently acceptable to our State Department, it won't be acceptable to our people.

So, yes, indeed, there is a concern I have for a European dedication to human rights and the common values that seems to stop just as soon as business interests are involved, or the expenditure of governmental funds are involved. I would certainly like to see a Europe that expects us to join hands with Europe on Kosovo, to join hands with us on dealing with Iran.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Sherman. I would like to recognize, Mel, a new Member who has joined us on our panel today, Dr. John Cooksey, a Republican from Louisiana, who serves also not only on our International Relations Committee, but also on our Agriculture and Transportation Committees. Dr. Cooksey.

Mr. COOKSEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, it is great to be here, and be here in this apparently landmark, first-time virtual reality transatlantic communication. I love Strasbourg, it is a great city, and love Europe.

I would like to touch on a couple of areas that are related to my Committees. I just left an Agriculture Committee meeting, and last year when I was over there, I actually was on my way back from a trip visiting military installations, we stopped in Ireland one night and we refueled and left the next morning, but I read the Sunday morning paper, and there was a lot of information about the genetically modified organisms. As a physician who is trained in the scientific method, I felt like this was something that came out of the National Inquirer. You may not be familiar with the national Inquirer, but I am sure you have some comparable publications over there, but I feel like there is a lot of misinformation there, and I feel like a lot of times it is important for those of us that are in leadership government positions to bring the truth out and to tell the people that the world really is not flat, and tell the people that we are in global markets and that we are moving into some exciting times in this 21st century.

Another area that I would like to talk about is basically about the hushkits. My wife and I were over for a wedding near Toulouse last year and I visited the Air Bus factory. I am a pilot, still fly some, through probably no one is safe when I am flying, but I do fly occasionally still, in a small plane, a Baron, but you have a wonderful airplane; the Airbus is a great airplane that can compete with anything that is built anywhere in the world. I don't feel that it is necessary for the EU to hide behind this "hushkit" problem. Point in case, Monday night I flew back from my home district, and flew from Louisiana to Memphis. There was a problem with the approach radar here at Reagan National Airport, so just before we took off at 8:20, the pilot said, "We won't be able to leave because the approach radar is off", but he said, "it doesn't matter, we will be able to land at Reagan National Airport even if it is 2 o'clock in the morning because we are flying an Air Bus and it meets all of the sound requirements". Had we been on another plane that did not, we would not have been able to do it.

But, quite frankly, as a pilot and as a person who spends a lot of time on airlines, I feel that there is not total integrity in the position on these hushkits. We really need to all be honest with each other—and I know you have your groups that you have to listen to—but take my words for it—the Airbus is a good airplane, it will compete head-up with anything that Boeing or McDonnell Douglas or anyone else builds, and you don't need to hide behind that.

So, I threw out some points for discussion, and—I am from Louisiana, and I used to teach surgery courses. I have taught some surgery courses in Great Britain and Australia and Europe, and I always would tell everybody, “We think that all of you talk funny”, but, anyway, if you have trouble understanding my southern dialect, some of these people think we talk funny—so, anyway, I am sorry for getting your name wrong, but I am ready now.

Ms. PEIJS. I have no trouble with understanding you. I have every now and then more trouble with people from London than with you. So there is no problem. But maybe I may explain you one thing, and it is we don't have the hushkits as a protection measure for Airbus. You have to keep in mind that Europe, we have 100 million people more than the United States, but the area where they are living is much denser. It is much smaller than the United States. So, our people are living almost on the airport, so that is really a big difference with United States. We can't explain to the people, we can't sell to the people that we spent millions and millions of dollars to keep the noise out of the houses and so on, and that we don't do anything on the plane who are bringing all this noise, and that is the continuing misunderstanding between United States and Europe because, really, our people are much closer to the airport than in the United States, and that is really a point of concern for us, and our people don't want it anymore. So, we have to do something, and we hope sincerely that we can do it together with the United States, and there is also our Commissioner, Madame Palacio, she made an opening to go further in the negotiations for the United States, and we hope sincerely that you take this opening and that we find a solution together.

Mr. COOKSEY. That is great.

Chairman GILMAN. If I might interrupt just a moment—please forgive me, Mel and Karla—I am being called to testify at another Committee, and I will be back shortly. I hope you are still here when I come back. If not, allow me—

Mrs. READ. I am sorry to interrupt you, I was going to say to you that we must close now. We have to go back to meetings in the Parliament, but I very much hope—I think this has been extraordinarily successful. I think we need to build on this when we have our two formal video-conference links in May, and I hope in other less formal links. I am really sorry that we, too, do have to go. There are several unresolved questions, Ben, to do with GMO's and particularly your colleague from California, I am sure that we are going to have some—how can I put it—very lively and fine exchanges of views, and we very much look forward to that. I have forgotten your colleague's name, forgive me, but he clearly has got very, very strong—

Chairman GILMAN. Dr. Cooksey, and Brad Sherman from California, and Doug Bereuter.

Mrs. READ [continuing]. Brad Sherman from California. We have some equally robust and lively Parliamentarians, and I will make sure that many of those are here for future discussions. But can we close from this end, Ben?

Chairman GILMAN. Yes, by all means. Mel and Karla—and mention to Carlos and Elmar—how much we appreciate on such short notice you have made yourselves available. It is a good start, let us build on it. Hopefully we will be able to have better mutual recognition of the problems that exist. God bless, and happy Easter to both of you.

Mrs. READ. A happy Easter to you, too, and to all of yours. Goodbye.

Ms. PEIJS. Goodbye.

Chairman GILMAN. Thank you. Goodbye.

[Whereupon, at 11:15 a.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

